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Ex-Kenton Treasurer Sentenced to Prison as “Habitual Offender” for Theft

Dover – The Attorney General’s office announced that Stephanie Mickle, the former Treasurer of Kenton, was sentenced today to eight years in prison for theft of Kenton town funds and forgery of town documents.

Mickle pled guilty to 3 counts of felony Theft over \$50,000 on January 26, 2011. Following her conviction, prosecutor R. David Favata petitioned the Court to sentence Mickle as an habitual offender. Kent County Superior Court Judge William L. Witham, Jr. granted the State’s motion and sentenced her today as a habitual offender. Under Delaware law, offenders convicted of 4 separate and distinct felonies can be declared a “Habitual Offender” and sentenced to enhanced penalties up to life in prison.

Judge Witham also ordered Mickle to pay the Town of Kenton \$198,013 in restitution and, following her release from prison, sentenced her to two years of intensive probation followed by level 1 probation until restitution is paid. She was also ordered to obtain a mental health evaluation and treatment and to maintain full-time employment in a position with no access to funds or other peoples’ personal information.

Mickle was arrested in September, 2010 by Special Investigators from the Attorney General’s office and was charged with 3 counts of Theft over \$50,000 and two counts of Forgery Second Degree. Mickle’s arrest followed an investigation by the Attorney General’s Fraud and Consumer Protection Division following a referral by the State Auditor’s Office, which had conducted an audit at the request of Kenton town officials. The agencies’ investigations revealed that Mickle made herself Town Manager with forged town Council Meeting documents and then proceeded to sell the town’s cell phone tower easement and access those funds for personal use. Investigators also learned that from 2008-2010, approximately 900 fraudulent financial transactions were made by Mickle, who as Kenton Treasurer had complete control of the town’s bank accounts. Mickle used debit cards, checks, computer transactions, and electronic transfers of funds to pay personal expenses, including previous court-ordered restitution.

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